

What is claimed is:

1. An image data management apparatus comprising:  
property information obtaining means for obtaining  
property information of an image data set to be managed;

5 security processing method setting means for setting a  
security processing method for each of items of the property  
information;

security processing means for carrying out security  
processing on each of the items of the property information  
10 according to the security processing method that has been set;

attachment means for attaching the property information  
having been subjected to the security processing to the image  
data set; and

image data storage means for storing the image data set  
15 attached with the property information.

2. An image data management apparatus as defined in Claim  
1, further comprising:

attachment decision means for setting whether each of  
the items of the property information is attached to the image  
20 data set; and

property information storage means for storing, in  
relation to the image data set, the item or items of the property  
information that have been set to be not attached, wherein

the attachment means attaches only the remaining items  
25 of the property information that have been set to be attached.

3. An image data management apparatus as defined in Claim

1, wherein the security processing method that can be set by the security processing method setting means refers to no processing, encryption processing, or electronic watermark processing.

5           4. An image data management apparatus as defined in Claim 1, wherein the image data storage means and the property information storage means are connected to each other via a network.

10           5. An image data management apparatus as defined in any one of Claims 1 to 4, wherein the property information includes an item representing a parameter of image processing to be carried out on the image data set.